

ORIG: GACarver, Jr./WNelson/DBlauffard

DUTY: DCI/SAVA

EXT:    
DATE: 4Nov68

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CITE DIRECTOR

[PRIORITY SAIGON

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1. THE MOOD, TEMPER AND INTENTIONS OF OUR SOUTH VIETNAMESE ALLIES, AS YOU MAY WELL IMAGINE, ARE MATTERS OF GREAT CONCERN TO SENIOR LEVELS HERE. THE CORNER INTO WHICH THIEU PUBLICLY PAINTED HIMSELF IN HIS 2 NOVEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEECH, AND HANOI'S OBVIOUSLY DELIGHTED INTENTION OF BURRING HARD ON THE SENSITIVE NERVE OF WASHINGTON-SAIGON RELATIONS, HAVE NATURALLY COMPOUNDED OUR MASTERS' CONCERN. WE REALIZE THAT LITTLE CAN PROFITABLY BE DONE WITH OUR SOUTH VIETNAMESE ALLIES IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO. IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST THAT LONG FOR SPLEEN TO BE VENTED, TEMPER TO COOL, REASON TO RETURN AND -- A POINT WE SUSPECT LOOMS VERY LARGE IN VIETNAMESE EYES -- FOR THE US ELECTORAL PICTURE TO BE CLARIFIED. ON THE OTHER HAND, DURING THIS

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BRIEF PERIOD WE NEED TO EXCHANGE OUR OWN VIEWS ON HOW BEST TO  
MOVE WITH MAXIMUM DISPATCH ONCE MOVEMENT BECOMES POSSIBLE.

2. IT SEEMS TO US THAT IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS (AND OURS),  
THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE FACTS OF REAL WORLD LIFE THE SOUTH  
VIETNAMESE SIMPLY MUST HOIST ABOARD:

A. PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S PUBLICLY ENUNCIATED  
COMMITMENT OF THE US TO A BOMBING HALT AND QUADRIPARTITE  
NEGOTIATIONS IN PARIS IS NOT GOING TO BE REVERSED (UNLESS HANOI'S  
MILITARY ~~VIOLATIONS~~ VIOLATIONS ARE PERSISTENT AND FLAGRANT).

B. THE NEXT PRESIDENT (WHOEVER HE MAY BE) AND, PARTICULARLY,  
THE NEXT CONGRESS WILL GIVE THE GVN AND THE VIETNAM  
STRUGGLE SHORT SHRIFT IF SAIGON'S LEADERS REFUSE TO COOPERATE  
WITH WASHINGTON.

C. GIVEN THE REAL WORLD AS IT NOW IS, SAIGON'S LEADERS  
WILL SCUTTLE THEMSELVES IF THEY DO NOT PUT ASIDE THEIR SUICIDAL  
FIXATION ON THE NLF'S ROLE IN THE PARIS CONVERSATIONS AND, INSTEAD,  
CONCENTRATE ON THE CONSIDERABLE MILEAGE TO BE MADE OUT OF THE

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FACT THAT HANOI HAS BEEN FORCED TO ACCEPT AN ARRANGEMENT IN WHICH IT IS COMPELLED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GVN'S EXISTENCE AND PUISSANCE, SOMETHING HANOI HERETOFORE HAS ADAMANTLY REFUSED TO DO.

3. WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT OUR VIETNAMESE COLLEAGUES FACE UP TO THE FACTS OF LIFE OUTLINED ABOVE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THEY MIGHT BE RECEPTIVE TO THE PLAUSIBLY ARGUABLE (EVEN IF NOT IRREFUTABLY DEMONSTRABLE) THESIS THAT THE COMMUNIST CAUSE IS FLOUNDERING UNDER INCREASING MILITARY AND POLITICAL PRESSURE AND THAT THE ONLY HOLE ~~IN~~ CARDS LEFT IN HANOI'S HAND INVOLVE EXACERBATING SAIGON-US RELATIONS AND SETTING NON-COMMUNIST VIETNAMESE AT EACH OTHERS THROATS. IF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE LET THEMSELVES BE SUCKERED INTO PLAYING HANOI'S GAME, THE COMMUNISTS MAY YET WIN THE POT. IF OUR VIETNAMESE REFUSE TO PLAY THIS GAME, HOWEVER, HANOI'S REMAINING CARDS BECOME WORTHLESS. SOMEHOW, WE MUST GET SOUTH VIETNAM'S LEADERS TO START THINKING AND ACTING ALONG THESE LINES.

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4. WE NOTE FROM YOUR EXCELLENT RECENT REPORTING THAT KY  
AND <sup>2</sup> [REDACTED] (AT LEAST) ARE CAPABLE OF FACING UP TO REALITY. DO  
YOU FEEL THAT, AS SOON AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT, YOU COULD PROFITABLY  
BEGIN TO ZERO IN QUIETLY ON A SELECT LIST OF KEY STATION CONTACTS  
IN AN EFFORT TO EDUCATE THEM ALL AND GET ALL OF THEM THINKING IN  
THE REAL WORLD. PERHAPS YOU COULD UTILIZE <sup>3</sup> [REDACTED] CONTACTS WITH  
VICE PRESIDENT KY, INTERIOR MINISTER KHIEM, JGS CHIEF CAO VAN VIEN,  
ETC. OTHER PERSONS OF INFLUENCE WHO IMMEDIATELY COME TO MIND  
ARE <sup>4</sup> [REDACTED] ALL OF WHOM WE SHOULD  
BE ABLE TO EXPLOIT FOR THIS PURPOSE. FINALLY, WE HAVE THE GROUP OF  
PERSONS FORMERLY CLOSE TO KY WHO HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT REMOVED  
FROM INFLUENCE SINCE THIEU SEIZED CONTROL BUT WHO MAY BE ABLE TO  
EXERCISE SOME LEVERAGE, E.G. [REDACTED] AND GEN. LOAN.

5. ANY SUCH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AS THAT OUTLINED ABOVE WOULD  
HAVE TO BE HANDLED WITH GREAT DELICACY AND CARE AND WOULD  
OBVIOUSLY REQUIRE THE AMBASSADOR'S BLESSING. (AS INDICATED IN REF B,

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TO [

WE WILL DISPATCH ANY OFFICERS YOU WANT TO CALL FOR ON TDY TO AID IN THIS ENDEAVOR.) FURTHERMORE, THIS MAY NOT EVEN BE THE RIGHT TACK TO TAKE. LET US KNOW IF YOU THINK SO, OR SUGGEST ALTERNATE MEANS OF HELPING TO MANEUVER THIEU AND THE GVN OUT OF THEIR CURRENT POSITION.

6. PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT THIS CABLE REPRESENTS THOUGHTS ON WHICH WE SOLICIT YOUR COMMENTS, NOT A DIRECTIVE TELLING YOU TO CHARGE OFF ~~HALF COCKED~~. IN PREPARING YOUR RESPONSE, I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR INFORMALLY SOUNDING OUT [ ] FOR HIS VIEWS AND SUGGESTIONS. I KNOW HE IS COMMENDABLY SCRUPULOUS ABOUT MAINTAINING HIS PURITY IN HIS NEW POSITION, BUT IN THIS CRITICAL INSTANCE OUR DESIRE FOR HIS OPINIONS OUTWEIGHS OUR CONCERN FOR HIS VIRGINITY.

## END OF MESSAGE

\*Initial suggestions and comments from Station following announcement of bombing halt.  
\*\* Hqs. shares Station's concern about developing situation, will provide any necessary assistance.

C/VNO [ ] (draft)

C/FE [ ] (draft)

DDP

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Richard Helms

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